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ABSTRACT

This paper details the responses of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) to the Joint Committee's California Master Plan for Education--Kindergarten through University. The paper registers responses to aspects of the Plan with which they strongly disagree or which they strongly support. The ASCCC finds that the Plan's most serious defect is that it projects a view of education as the teaching and learning of "skills sets," of bringing students up to a pre-established norm for their grade level, and of confirming their mastery through standardized assessments. The ASCCC feels the aforementioned are a means to an education, but they are not its sum and substance. The ideal of democratic education is rooted in the view of each human being as a center of value, as possessing inherent worth, with this value realized in a social context, in which the individual supports and is supported by the surrounding society. One ASCCC objection is to Recommendation 9.2, which refers to a "set of activities" reserved for tenure-track/permanent faculty. ASCCC claims that part-time faculty cannot perform specific functions adequately because they have been effectively removed from the academy's family-like community. (Author/NB)

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Response of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges to *The California Master Plan for Education*

Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges

2002

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Response of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges to
The California Master Plan for Education

GENERAL REMARKS

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges appreciates this opportunity to comment on the final draft of the Joint Committee's Master Plan for Education-Kindergarten through University. There are many recommendations in this draft with which we agree and some to which we take exception, and we will comment in some detail on those about which we feel most strongly.

We would like to begin, however, with some general statements about the Plan as a whole. In commenting on the first draft, we observed that the Plan seemed to suffer from "an overdeveloped left brain and an underdeveloped heart." In this, we intended to call attention to what we still consider to be the Plan's most serious defect: Too often, the Plan projects a view of education as the teaching and learning of "skills sets," of bringing students up to a pre-established norm for their grade level, and of confirming their mastery through standardized assessments. While we wholeheartedly agree that certain skills of literacy and numeracy are essential for progress in education and that assessment of learning is an integral part of the teaching-learning process, we feel that these are only the means to an education, they are not its sum and substance. To suppose that they are is, we believe , to sell education—and hence students—short.

The ideal of democratic education, of the provision of a full range of educational opportunity for all citizens, no matter what their ethnic or socio-economic backgrounds, is certainly one of the noblest and most inspiring ideals ever created by humankind. It is rooted in the view of each human being as a center of value, as possessing inherent worth, with this value realized in a social context, in which the individual supports and is supported by the surrounding society. Education is, from top to bottom, about people, about their becoming whole and living the richest possible lives, and about their developing the generosity of spirit wherein they eschew envy and freely celebrate the successes of others. Education is born in love, in the need to be nurtured and the desire to nurture, and education at its best never strays from its founding principle. Formal education is part of the process of becoming a whole person, and to become whole is to develop one's capacity for love, the ability to take joy in one's self, in others, in one's work, in life itself. We find little of this conception of education in the current draft of the Plan. This criticism is not merely aesthetic (although it is that, too). It is in fact thoroughly pragmatic, for the sorts of recommendations that will be generated from the sort of vision of education we are offering will be very different from those in the current draft. We would argue that the quality of life of future generations of Californians is in the balance here, and that this is no trivial matter.

To acknowledge that our "product" at every level of education is human beings, and that our responsibility as educators is, again, at every level, to help them become more

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complete as people, has implications in every area addressed by the Plan. For example, in the area of professional development, it would result in less emphasis on the mastery of techniques (which, unfortunately, is what most teacher training is all about), and might instead point us down the path delineated by Parker Palmer in his book *The Courage to Teach*. Palmer shows us that we become better teachers to the degree that we become more authentic ourselves, and are thus able to relate authentically to our students. Professional development can focus on techniques, or it can focus on the need for authenticity—and there is no technique for becoming authentic. There are, however, conditions that are conducive to authentic behavior, and faculty can certainly focus on creating the supportive and trusting environments for themselves and their students in which authenticity may flourish.

Another example would be that of the financing of education. The Plan recognizes in its treatment of pre-K and K-12 education the need for compensatory resources for those who are socio-economically disadvantaged. There is no such recognition, however, in the treatment of postsecondary schooling. To argue, as the Plan seems to do, that this is because there is no state mandate for higher education, is to seriously miss the point. The fact is that the per-student funding of the post secondary segments is significantly disparate, with the University of California currently funded at $25,000 per FTES, the California State University funded at $11,000 per FTES, and the Community Colleges funded at $4,700 per FTES. This funding pattern extends back at least to 1965, with virtually no fluctuation over the past 37 years. This pattern, which clearly discriminates in favor of the rich and against the poor, hardly embodies the principle that all of our citizens, by virtue of their humanity, have a right to fulfill their potential. Indeed, the pattern seems to embody the opposite perspective, and yet nowhere is it challenged in the current draft of the Plan. We recommended that the Plan extend the "Quality Education Model" to the postsecondary segments, and that it lay the foundation for a positive response to the "Real Costs of Education" analysis currently underway by the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges. We were pleased to see that this recommendation is acknowledged in the current draft as being "consistent with our vision of developing a coherent system of education," but were disappointed that the Committee stopped short of endorsing the proposal.

RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 9.2 – The California Community Colleges, California State University and University of California shall report to the Legislature the set of activities reserved for permanent/tenure-track faculty and the rationale for why temporary faculty cannot be enlisted to assist in carrying out such activities.

There is an image of the typical college student and of typical college attendance patterns that seems to dominate the draft Plan, and which is rooted, we suspect, in the rapidly fading vision of computer-based distance education. This vision of "anytime, anywhere" education sees students as rooted in no single institution, but as drifting from one college to another, taking a course here and a course there, surfing their way toward their

educational goals. However, the Web has not materialized as the dominant medium of delivery it was once envisioned to become; our own data show that distance education is a minuscule component of our overall effort and is liable to remain that way. For the vast majority of our 2 1/2 million students who receive their instruction in classrooms, the vision of student-as-drifter from institution to institution does not apply. And to the extent that it does, we consider the situation to be unhealthy.

A phenomenological look at our own educations reveals in the case of our best institutions an intimacy and family-like community which leads us to think of the college from which we each graduate as our "alma mater," the "bounteous mother" who has nurtured us, who has valued us and helped to make us whole. The principal argument against the use of part-time faculty is not that they cannot perform this or that specific function (if compensated, which is a big "if"); it is rather that the college family requires full time commitment and participation if it is to be fully functional. The analogy of the nurturing family applies not only to faculty, but to students as well. The student who indeed drifts from school to school, is like the foster child being passed from home to home. She may receive love and attention and achieve, in a technical sense, her educational goals, but she will have no "alma mater," and we believe that that is a significant deficit.

In sum, this is another instance of the Committee thinking too much with its head and too little with its heart. Faculty responsibilities and college life itself cannot be reduced to a "set of activities," and the submission of the lists and rationales called for in this recommendation will certainly not generate or support those values which gave substance and lifelong meaning to the educational experiences of the Committee members themselves. **We urge the Committee members, therefore, to make their own educational experiences the touchstone of their recommendations**, and not to be seduced by the false claim that the world has changed so much that those experiences are irrelevant. Again, the most disturbing feature of this draft of the plan is that it is out of touch with the fundamental and enduring values of education, with the result that it risks denying those values to future generations.

RECOMMENDATION 9.3 – The California Community Colleges, California State University, and University of California should provide adequate pro rata compensation to temporary faculty who agree to perform functions usually restricted to permanent and tenure-track faculty.

We strongly support the provision of pro rata pay for part-time faculty for any and all services they may perform. As we have just explained, however, the argument for staffing with full-time faculty goes well beyond issues of equal compensation.

RECOMMENDATION 14: ***Supporting text:*** **Our current system …assumes that all students at each grade will achieve a prescribed set of standards within a set amount of instructional time.**

RECOMMENDATION 14.3 – The State should assign responsibility and provide

targeted resources at the postsecondary level to enable increasing numbers of college students to succeed in their academic coursework and attain certificates and degrees and to ensure that no category of students fails to achieve their educational goals in disproportionate numbers.

RECOMMENDATION 15: Provide additional learning support services at kindergarten, grades three and eight, in the last two years of high school, and during the first year of college to assist students who take longer to meet standards or may be ready to accelerate.

While we believe that the specifics of Recommendation 15 may need further discussion (the last two years of high school, for example, might be a bit late for the recommended intervention), we support these recommendations (#s 14-15) and welcome the addition to Recommendation 14.2 stressing student equity. We believe that these recommendations have particular relevance to the later discussion of student achievement (#s 20 ff.). We endorse especially the introductory text to **Recommendation 20** (on p. 66 of the published *Plan*) when it observes that "supplemental support programs, at every level from pre-kindergarten through postsecondary education, must focus on having *all* students 'learn the first time' rather than having to 'catch up.'" Our own research in basic skills suggests that the Committee is correct in asserting in the supporting text to **Recommendation 20** that "*Interventions must not be of the type traditionally used in remedial programs – for example, stand-alone programs focused on basic skills.* Rather, they should consist of additional time and instructional support in a curriculum that is matched to course standards...." While our research is not complete, initial surveys and discussions with experts in the field indicate that remediation is most effective when it is perceived by students as part of the progression toward their educational goals, as opposed to an obstacle between them and those goals.

Lack of adequate preparation is clearly a major problem for students in the community colleges, given that we are the institutions that offer access to all those who might benefit and are frequently institutions of the "second chance" for those who have failed to succeed elsewhere. We certainly applaud the Committee's focus on strengthening K-12 education, and especially its emphasis on the equitable provision of adequate resources. Whereas this will no doubt be the dominant component of a long-term solution to college readiness, the community colleges in the short term will have to retain remedial instruction as a major feature of their mission. Because our students have "farther to go" than those in the other public segments, the equitable provision of adequate resources is especially important to the community colleges. As indicated earlier, we believe that there is currently an inversion of resources in postsecondary education such that those who need the most are receiving the least. We would like to see this problem recognized and addressed in the new Master Plan.

RECOMMENDATION 20: *Supporting text:* Measurement matters.

While we agree in some senses about the importance of assessing student achievement and progress (see response to next recommendation), we feel that the Committee has tilted much too far in the current draft toward embracing a focus on measurable student learning outcomes. In this, the authors of the Plan seem to share the perspective of the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges, which has recently adopted new Standards that have measurable student learning outcomes at their core. We refer the Joint Committee to the Academic Senate letter to the Commission on draft C of the standards, and a statement on the new standards by the AAUP, which we helped to draft.

For one thing, there is absolutely no data or research supporting the contention that a focus on measurable student learning outcomes truly improves the quality of education. Repeated requests to the Accrediting Commission and to so-called experts on learning outcomes have resulted in no data being forthcoming. There is, however, substantial evidence that efforts to measure learning outcomes result in a massive diversion of resources into data collection and into faculty activities that are at best tangential to their primary roles as educators. And, as we said, there is no evidence that these expenditures of money and energy are productive of qualitative improvements in students' education.

Most importantly, we feel that the stress on learning outcomes is not credible in that it reflects a vision of education, or a theoretical model, that is contrary to the reality of education itself. Again, if the members of the Committee would use their own educational experience as a touchstone, they could not help but recognize that the most significant effects of their own educations are not measurable, and could not have been displayed on tests taken upon the granting of their degrees. Education, we suggested earlier, is concerned with the whole person, with self-actualization. As such, it provides one with the resources for living one's life richly and productively, and with the confidence for doing the same. One's educational experience remains with one through the duration of one's life, inseparable from one's growth and development as a person. Unfortunately, the misplaced obsession with short-term learning outcomes would reduce the capacity of our institutions to play this critical, life-affirming role by diverting resources into irrelevant activities.

RECOMMENDATION 20.3 – The State should encourage…postsecondary institutions to develop end-of-course assessments that can serve the dual purposes of measuring what a student has mastered…and of the student's readiness to successfully undertake learning at the next…level.

We have such end-of-course assessments: they are called "final examinations." We cannot help but wonder at the source of the distrust, evident throughout much of the Plan, of so many of the things we do, and do very well. We feel certain that the source is not our students; their demands for accountability take the form of a call for teachers who can teach, for sufficient sections of the classes they need, and for counselors, librarians and other support staff who will be there when they need them. And despite levels of funding that systematically discriminate against our students, the California community colleges regularly satisfy their expectations. (We except well-maintained facilities and adequate

technologies from our list; because these cannot be carried on the backs of personnel, they have been and remain inadequate.)

With respect to examinations and to those measures of student success that we call grades, the faculty within our system, to the extent that resources permit, engage in faculty development activities designed to increase the effectiveness of examinations and the accuracy of their evaluation. We would certainly understand, and indeed we would welcome, a call to intensify our efforts in this regard, coupled with a recommendation for adequate levels of funding for faculty development. What we do not understand—and hence do not welcome—are the implications that we care so little for students and are so professionally derelict or inept that our efforts need to be replaced by something with "true" value and significance.

RECOMMENDATION 21: California's colleges and universities should work collaboratively to develop a means of assessing the learning of students enrolled in public postsecondary education.

This recommendation and its supporting text illustrate the point just made. It is indeed truly offensive. Look, for example, at the closing sentences of the supporting text: *The expertise exists among our talented faculty to make significant progress in this area. California's taxpayers deserve nothing less than our best efforts.* The reference to "our talented faculty" is clearly patronizing and insincere; the author of the Plan has just held forth at length implying the incompetence of faculty to perform meaningful assessment. Were this recommendation to be implemented, California taxpayers would deserve to be outraged at the waste of resources involved in this effort to accomplish what are already integral features of the educational process: assessment through papers, examinations and other assignments, and final grades. Again, who among the Committee members or their staff has determined that college and university faculty are so incompetent in the area of assessment?

RECOMMENDATION 23: The Legislature should mandate the development of transparent and sustainable articulation and transfer processes to provide students with clear curriculum guidance on the transition between high school and college and between and among two- and four-year colleges and universities while avoiding the complexity of campus-by-campus differentiation.

For almost 100 years, in the case of the community colleges, and more than that in the other segments, the campuses of the three public segments of higher education in California have developed autonomously, with the result that this state offers a richer diversity of educational opportunities than any other. This institutional diversity is a source of value for the students of the state. In the case of the four year colleges and universities, different approaches to curriculum and instruction make it possible for students to choose not only the school that offers instruction in their primary field of interest, but also the campus whose approach to education is most conducive to the student's development as a person. Community colleges also offer a variety of options

allowing for this personal "fit" of student to campus; they also offer students the advantage that each has developed in response to the economic and social needs of a specific community.

In sum, we see the "complexity of campus-by-campus differentiation" to be a positive value supportive of students' progress toward their educational goals. The draft Plan, on the other hand, seems to press for the homogenization of our campuses, which would deny students the advantages of institutional diversity. As our response to the next recommendation will indicate, we believe that the transfer needs of students can be accommodated without this loss.

RECOMMENDATION 23.2 – The governing boards of the University of California, California State University, and California Community Colleges, themselves or through the efforts of their faculty, should provide for the devising of system-wide articulation policies to enable students to transfer units freely between and among public colleges and universities in California.

The Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS), through its IMPAC (Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum) project, is bringing faculty from the three segments together in regional and statewide meetings to discuss competencies required for transfer to upper division majors. In the course of these discussions, artificial barriers to transfer are identified and eliminated, and the ground is laid for articulation agreements between community colleges and their four-year counterparts. Because of the institutional diversity to which we have referred, these agreements must often be on a campus-by-campus basis. Nevertheless, the information necessary for these agreements is being generated and distributed statewide and, as agreements are reached, they are recorded in the ASSIST database (whose of efficacy is currently threatened by inadequate funding).

Currently, we are not permitted to require students seeking intra- or intersegmental transfer to seek counseling. The Legislature could help us here, not only by giving us the authority to impose such a requirement, but by funding us at levels that would permit us to hire counselors in sufficient numbers. (A recent survey by a Chancellor's Office task force indicates that, statewide, our counselor/student ratio is 1/1500.)

The area of transfer is one of those in which the earlier-mentioned Master Plan view of the student as peripatetic institutional drifter seems to predominate. We maintain that students generally do—and should—navigate the shoals of intersegmental transfer only once. We believe further that the combination of IMPAC-generated major preparation information, campus-to-campus articulation agreements, and required counseling would minimize the trauma of transfer and the need for students to repeat work already completed. At the same time, such an arrangement would preserve the rich variety of choices currently available to California's postsecondary students.

RECOMMENDATION 23.3 – The University of California, California State University, and California Community College systems should establish an intersegmental group that includes faculty and students, to consider what steps need to be taken to establish a transfer Associate's degree, within the existing Associate degree unit requirements, the attainment of which will guarantee admission, and course transferability, to any CSU or UC campus (though not necessarily the major of choice)for students successfully completing the transfer degree program.

The Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) has discussed the transfer Associate's degree and decided, at its last meeting of the 2001-02 year, that the development of such a degree would not be helpful and was not worthy of further consideration. Community colleges currently develop transfer degrees on a campus-by campus basis, many of them have done so, and the Academic Senate believes that this is the appropriate approach to such a degree.

The reasons for our dissent from this recommendation are summarized in the following notes from a task force meeting on this Joint Committee Recommendation held this past May:

- *What is the nature of the guarantee as envisioned? RE: CSU - The Master Plan refers to a "guarantee" of transfer, but such a guarantee already exists for CSU campuses and programs that are not impacted. A student who completes 58 units at 2.0 (in the correct pattern) is "guaranteed" a slot at CSU, however this is a somewhat hollow guarantee due to impacted campuses and impacted programs (which are rising dramatically). Unless CSU will provide a super guarantee (campus and major of your choice) there is no value added in the concept. RE: UC - Certainly UC will not guarantee admission without additional academic criteria.*

- *We already provide guarantees on an individual basis (TAAs and TAGs) that are much more precise tools for education planning. (And CSU is officially exploring an enhanced program of transfer guarantees at this very moment.)*

- *What would constitute the general education pattern of such a degree? Would it be based upon IGETC? CSU Breadth? Some new compromise? Using either IGETC or CSUB to the exclusion of the other would be disastrous for some populations of students. We have arrived at a fairly workable GE pattern that meets UC and CSU needs; this attempt at standardization could threaten current stability.*

- *What about science and math majors? The current GE pattern is deficient. At the moment, IMPAC and others are exploring the notion of a "SCI-GETC" or more intense GE pattern for science and math majors. This effort at more precise preparation could be threatened by a move to water down requirements for standardization.*

- *What about major preparation? There is wide variety in the number and type of units required/recommended for major prep. Will this degree have a specific number or type? If not, then what constitutes this portion of the degree?*

- *What about electives? Would just any electives do? Or will there be some requirement/recommendation that electives complement intended major? Who will decide?*

- *It is certainly possible to design the appropriate 60-unit program for a potential transfer student, but the design differs by student choice of college and choice of major. (And changes so frequently!) To*

pretend otherwise is a disservice in student educational planning. Students typically make numerous shifts in their goals; a simplistic approach may mislead them and waste their time.

- *If these precise questions cannot be answered (what are the GE requirements, major prep recommendations, appropriate electives and the required number in each category) then what would officially constitute such a degree? Would it not become essentially what we have already...a situation where a student must design the appropriate lower division course work based upon their individual choices and goals? We could call it a "degree" but in reality it would simply be an individual recommendation for a particular pattern of courses.*

- *Would it do any harm to pursue such a degree?*

    - *Perhaps it would?*
        - *The creation of a transfer degree may denigrate other AA degrees as "merely vocational".*
        - *Students may be misled by simplistic statements and thus fail to design a sufficiently detailed educational plan.*
        - *Statewide standards might be insufficient to prepare certain students, thus causing them to take extra units after transfer.*
        - *The notion of a "guarantee" can set up failed expectations.*
        - *Campuses often put extra, not transfer-related, units in an AA degree --- do we want transfer students to take extra units?*

    - *Perhaps not?*
        - *A widely advertised pattern with a guaranteed CSU outcome (for certain campuses, not all) might be of value for some portion of our transfer population. If CSU intends to extend a true guarantee (any campus, any program) then there might be a great value. (But this would still be just a CSU guarantee, not UC or independent or out-of-state guarantee --- not a transfer guarantee.)*
        - *If the concept of the degree causes students to seek appropriate counseling and determine an appropriate plan for their individually designed "degree" it could serve as an incentive for better planning.*

- *The greatest danger lies in the idea, not the reality, we fear. Policy makers have attached themselves to this idea as a panacea for transfer woes. It is not a cure or a solution (or even a very good idea except in a narrow sense). This may divert energy and resources from the real needs (more counselors, more full-time faculty, more transfer staff, more articulation officers, greater funds spent on faculty consultation re: curriculum, more money for college visits, for outreach, etc.), which may be less attractive for legislators.*

Most people agree (so far in our limited consultation) that the transfer degree is of value in a local context when designed as an umbrella concept to contain a wide variety of preparatory plans. It now serves in maybe 1/4 of the colleges (or less) as a marketing strategy to get students to understand they need to plan their units. To go beyond that local vision (which is successful in some campuses and unsuccessful in others) could be a waste and a diversion of limited resources at this time.

We feel that these considerations are decisive with respect to this issue.

RECOMMENDATION 34: The California Community Colleges should be reconstituted as a public trust with its board of governors responsible for overall governance, setting system policy priorities, budget advocacy, and accountability for a multi-campus system.

We agree that the California community college system should be reconstituted as a public trust. We understand this recommendation to be an effort to move the community colleges into full partnership with the other postsecondary segments. Such a move seems to us to be essential if community college students are ever to be afforded educational opportunities on a par with their four-year counterparts. The pattern of disparate funding mentioned earlier reflects a view of the community colleges as the stepchildren of postsecondary education, and of community college students as undeserving of equity. It is our hope that the proposed change in governance structure would help to correct the perceptions behind this discriminatory pattern of funding.

RECOMMENDATION 43.1 – The State's accountability framework for postsecondary education should be improved by modification and expansion of the 'partnership' budget approach, currently applied to UC and CSU, to include all postsecondary education, clarify the link between performance and funding, and adopt realistic alternatives for times of revenue downturns.

We are opposed to performance based funding in education. Our reasons are set forth in the paper, *Performance Based Funding: A Faculty Critique*, adopted by the Academic Senate plenary body in fall 1999, a copy of which is attached. Simply put, funding is not and never will be the reason we work hard for the success of our students. Rather, the desire to do such work is the reason why we are community college faculty in the first place. The chronic absence of adequate funding, however, certainly prevents us from doing our jobs as well as we would like.

RECOMMENDATION 44: The Legislature should direct a 13-member Quality Education Commission, consisting of business, parent, and education community leaders from throughout the state, to develop a California Quality Education Model (CQEM), to be consistent with the parameters set forth in this Plan, and use that model to determine an adequate level of funding necessary to support a high quality education for every student enrolled in public schools, PreK-12.

As mentioned at the close of our introductory remarks, we recommend that the Plan extend the "Quality Education Model" of funding to the postsecondary segments and, with respect to the community colleges, that the Legislature consider the "Real Costs of Education" analysis currently underway by the Chancellor's Office as the Quality Education Model for our system.

RECOMMENDATION 49: *Supporting text:* It has also been suggested that consideration be given to extending the Quality Education Model (see Recommendation 444) to the postsecondary education sector. This suggestion is consistent with our vision of developing a coherent system of education and would carry forth the recognition that education institutions serving greater proportions of students for whom additional services are necessary for them to reach common

expectations require additional resources beyond the adequate base provided to every campus within each respective system.

We are pleased that this suggestion is now in the mix, and hope that the analysis of the "Real Costs of Education," currently underway in our system, will contribute significantly to the discussions around this concept. We are persuaded that it is only through such an "adequacy model" of funding that the community colleges will be enabled to fulfill their statutory missions and deliver on the promises of quality education with equity that Californians have, through their Legislature, made to themselves.

RECOMMENDATION 49: The State should adopt policies to provide more stability for finance and dampen the 'boom and bust' swings of state appropriations for postsecondary education.

RECOMMENDATION 49.1 - The State should establish the California Community Colleges' share of overall state revenues guaranteed by Proposition 98 to K-14 education at 10.93 percent.

RECOMMENDATION 50: The Legislature and Governor should, after formal study of all relevant factors, determine and define how the costs of postsecondary education should be distributed among the State, the federal government, and students and their families, and thereupon design a new, fiscally responsible, and appropriately balanced student fee policy that would preserve access to higher education opportunity for all of California's students, particularly those from low-income and underrepresented groups.

RECOMMENDATION 50.1 – The State should adopt a student fee policy aimed at stabilizing student fees, such that, to the extent feasible, fees would increase in a moderate and predictable fashion when needed, and should resist pressure to buy out student fee increases or reduce student fees at CCC, CSU and UC during strong economic times.

RECOMMENDATION 50.2 –State policy should allow additional fee revenue collected by community colleges to remain with each college, without a General Fund offset, whenever fiscal conditions compel fees to be increased.

The Academic Senate agrees that the financing of postsecondary education needs to be stabilized and insulated against the boom and bust swings of the state's economy. It would certainly be a positive move toward the adequate financing of the community colleges to provide them with their statutorily guaranteed share of Proposition 98 funds.

We oppose the "high fee, high aid" approach to the stabilization of postsecondary funding, although we would agree that any increase in community college fees should augment the funding of the community colleges. In general, however, we believe that our commitment to open access requires fidelity to the promise of the 1960 Master Plan of a

tuition-free postsecondary education for all those who might benefit. We have seen historically that even minor increases in fees have a disproportionate impact on community college enrollments, and we support, therefore, a policy that would eliminate fees altogether as opposed to one based on regular moderate increases.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges would like to thank the Joint Committee for its kind attention to these comments on its final draft of *The California Master Plan for Education.*

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